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[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Assembly Question - Introduction of B.C.G. Vaccination in the Province - Papers Recorded.

THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, the 1st March 1949.

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The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Fort St. George, at eleven of the clock, Mr. Speaker (The Hon. Sri J. Sivashanmukham Pillai) in the Chair.

I-QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Introduction of B.C.G. Vaccination in the Province.

*750-A Q- Dr. S; Subrahmanya Ayyar (on behalf of Sri R. Subbier): Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Health be please to state -

(a) whether the attention of the Government have been drawn to a report in the newspapers of 4th February 1949 that the Government propose to introduce throughout this Province B.C.G. Vaccination:

(b) if so, whether the report is correct; and

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to make a statement on the floor of the House on the subject?

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"(a) Yes.

"(b) The Government have sanctioned a local team consisting of a medical officer, a health visitor, two clerks, one peon and one driver to receive training B.C.G. vaccination in the Madras City. The question of giving financial assistance to the U.M.T. Sanatorium for B.C.G. vaccination in Madanapalle area is under consideration.

"(c) No statement is consideration.

Dr. S. Subrahmanya Ayyar:-"Will the Government state why they embark upon this scheme when the opinion in the medical profession even among the leaders is very much divided?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"Opinion is not divided; except in the case of a few stray individuals, authoritative medical opinion is quite in favour of this form of vaccination. It is harless, effective and it is necessary in the present circumstances obtaining in the country."

Muhammad Raza Khan Sahib:-"Is it not a fact that two eminent physicians of Madras-Dr.M.R. Guruswami Mudaliyar and Dr. Srinivasan-have stated that on thewhole this is in an experimental stage, that we do not know the results and hence it should not be tried in Madras?".

The Hon. Sri A.B. Sheety:-"A statement has been ~~issued~~ issued by twelve well-known medical men, i.e., by Dr. B.C.Roy, Premier of West Bengal, the Director-General of the Health Services, the President of the Indian Medical Council and several other medical men. The Government of India have consulted experts who are in a position to give authoritative opinion and who can speak from experience. The experts are both foreigns as well as Indian."

Dr. S. Subrahmanya Ayyar:-"Is it not a fact that even in England the thing has not been adopted on a mass scale and is still in an experimental stage and they are afraid to introduce it on a mass scale?"

The Hon. Srm A.B. Shetty:-"It is not in an experimental stage, Sir. In America, in Canada and in most of the European countries it has been adopted on a mass scale. England, being a conservative, country has not taken to it."

Mohamed Abdul Salam Sahib Bahadur:-"Sir, there seems to be a lot of controversy about this. Since the Hon. Minister for Public Health is a layman, will he consult the medical talent available in the Cabinet and take its advice in the matter?"

The Hon.Sri A.B. Shettty:-"The Tuberculosis Adviser to the Government of India and the Superintendent of the Tuberculosis Sanatorium have both made authoritative pronouncements on this question. It is only at the instance of the Ministry of Health at the Centre that the B.C.G. inoculation campaign was started in Madras."

Mohamed Abdul Salam Sahib Bahadur:-"My question is whether the Hon. Dr. T.S.S. Rajan, the medical expert in the Cabinet has been consulted in the matter?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-" I do not think it is necesaary. Dr. Rajan is not an expert on tuberculosis." (Laughter.)

Begum Sultan Mir Amiruddin:-"Is it not of a fact, Sir, that inoculations are absolutely voluntary and there is no compulsion whatever about them?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"They are quite voluntary."

Sri V. Raghavayya:-"In view of the conflicting medical opinion, may I know if the Government propose to make resistance to this vaccination a penal offence?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"No, Sir, it is entirely voluntary. There are doctors and doctors. And 'doctors differ and patients suffer' is a well-known statement."

Muhammad Raza Khan Sahib:-"Inasmuch as there seems to be some controversy about the utility of the B.C.G. vaccine, will the Hon. Minister for Public Health and his Colleagues set an example ☒ by taking this vaccination and let others follow them?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Sheety:- "The first person to be vaccinated was the son of Dr. Vasudeva Rao."

Dr.S. Subrahmanya Ayyar:- "Is it not a fact that disasters have occurred after the B.C.G. inoculation in other countries? Have the Government told the people who come for injection that it is a strain of the tubercle bacilli that is being injected into them?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Sheety:-"People are being given all information. Great care is taken in regard to the preservation of B.C.G. vaccine. It is done in the laboratory of the King Institute by a man who had been to Copenhagen for practical training in the manufacture of the B.C.G. vaccine."

Sri A. Kameswara Rao:-"May I know the expenditure that would be incurred for this purpose?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"I do not have the exact figures now. It will not be much."

Mohamed Abdul Salam Sahib Bahadur:-"Arising out of the answer that this inoculation is not compulsory, may I produce documentary evidence to show that unless students produced letters from their parents that they do not want this vaccination, they are given this vaccination?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"A letter is being sent to the parents of the students asking them whether they are willing to have their children given this vaccination."

Begum Sultan Mir Amiruddin:-"May I know the approximate number of persons who have received this vaccination till now in Madras City?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"Over 600 people have been tuberculin-tested. Only those who are found negative are given this vaccination. The large majority of the people are positive."

Dr. S. Subrahmanya Ayyar:-"When out standard of living is so low, when the housing and other conditions of life are for from satisfactory and people cannot even stand the effects of the reaction to this vaccination. do the Government expect any benefit out of this vaccination?"

The Hon. Sri A.B. Shetty:-"I would request the hon. Member to read the statements that have appeared in the papers. He does not seem to have been following the papers at all.".

Education and Public Health

The question has been answered - vide copy of the printed proceedings of the Legislative Assembly at pages 15-16 c.f. No further action is called for in this file. The papers may now be Recorded.

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14.4.1949.

G.O.Ms.No. 1384 D/ 18-4-1949.

ABSTRACT:-

Legislative Assembly
Question - Introduction
of B.C.G. Vaccination
in the Province
Papers Recorded.

/True Copy/

Office Assistant

SP/4.9.

Madras Record Office.

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